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A Letter from Mr. HENRY HOLLINGSWORTH, to the American Philosophical Society, held at Philadelphia, &c.

Read before the Society, 17th of February, 1769.

GENTLEMEN,

THE laudable design with which you seem actuated to promote the good of your country, and the earnest desire you have expressed in the public papers, to be informed of whatever may tend to that purpose, induce me to lay before you such experiments as I have made and found effectual to destroy *the wild garlic*, with which the country is in many places infected, and which is very pernicious to the grain. If what I offer, shall meet with your approbation, and be judged worthy the attention of the public, you are at liberty to communicate it in such a way as you shall think most proper. For my own part I shall think myself happy if my experience may, by your means, be made useful to my country.

IN 1753, I fallowed and sowed with wheat, a field of about 50 acres, the greatest part of which was very full of garlic; I fallowed in May, stirred in August, and sowed in September. In April 1754, I perceived the wheat much choaked with garlic, and at harvest found in many parts of the field almost every tenth head was garlic, which rendered the wheat unfit for use, until by immersing it in tubs of water the garlic (which floats) was separated from it. But though the wheat, if carefully dried, receives little injury from this immersion, yet the trouble attending it is so great, as to discourage farmers from raising large crops. In April 1755, I planted the same field with Indian-corn, and had a good crop. In April 1756, I sowed the same field with oats, in August I ploughed down the oat stubble; and in September sowed a crop of wheat. In April 1757, I was agreeably surprized at seeing but very little garlic, and that small and dwindling; and at harvest there was scarce a head to be found, except along the side of the fences. The success of this culture, which was merely accidental, and done without any view of destroying the garlic, induced me to try the following experiment.

IN

IN April 1758, having fixed on a field for my next fall crop, which had produced Indian-corn the year before, and was equally full of garlic with that I mentioned before; I sowed part of it with oats, the other part I fallowed in June, and stirred in August, at which time I plowed in the out stubble, as before, and sowed the whole in September, causing the same ridge to pass through part of the stubble and part of the fallowed land. In April 1759, there was a very perceivable difference. The stubble part was green with wheat, but the fallowed part was of a bluish colour, occasioned by the quantity of garlic, and at harvest was full of large heads, while in the stubble part there was not one to be found.

SINCE that I have continued to sow oats in the garlicky lands designed for wheat, and find I have succeeded so well in destroying the garlic, that after three years culture in that way, the lands may be fallowed and sown with wheat in the usual manner, without any danger from that noxious plant.

SEVERAL of my neighbours have pursued the same method and find it answers. As the advantage of a crop of oats is more than equal to the difference between fallow and stubble ground wheat (where the land is tolerably good) I would recommend it to all who are troubled with garlic to make a trial. The only disadvantage will be the impoverishing their lands, which, if they have manure, may be easily remedied. At the same time, I would observe, that the stubble which is ploughed down serves for a manure, and nearly repairs the waste occasioned by the crop of oats.

IF it be asked why oats destroy garlic, I must confess I am unable to resolve the question. Perhaps ploughing the land in the month of April, when the greatest part of the oil of the root or clove is in the shoot, and turning it under at that time, destroys the roots more effectually than at any other season, and the mowing the oats, which is the method pursued by us, destroys the heads that would otherwise come to seed later in the year. Possibly the same tillage in the
same

same season without sowing oats, might answer the end proposed. But having never made the experiment I can say nothing certain on that head.

I am, &c.

H. HOLLINGSWORTH.

Head of Elk, Nov. 30, 1768.

Extract of a Letter from Mr. PETER MILLER, of Ephratah, to Mr. CHARLES THOMSON, on the time of sowing PEASE, so as to preserve the Crop from being worm-eaten.

“ THE pease I send you the sample of are the produce of last summer. Their seed was very much worm-eaten, but as the crop produced from them was no way infected, it is evident that their safety depended entirely on the time of sowing; which is about the 10th of June, new style. This hath been confirmed to me by a farmer here of a long experience.

“ THE best method would be to begin sowing towards the latter end of May, and continue for a few weeks, sowing some each week, or at the distance of 3 or 4 days, in order to discover whether the worm does not come from sowing in an improper season. Some Albany pease might likewise be tried as seed; all which I recommend to the prudent consideration of your society. For, if you could make any sure discovery for the use of the country, the public would be greatly indebted to you.

“ PEASE were heretofore very plenty in Pennsylvania. I knew one farmer in *Oley* who raised sixty bushels at a crop, and I did not hear that they were damaged at that time by the worm. I must not forget to tell you, that, as the pease I have sent you are of an excellent kind, and very scarce here, you will be careful to propagate their species. As to the *lentils* which are sent, the time of sowing them is early in the spring, and most commonly with oats.”

N. B.